NUMB. LXX.

The GUARDIAN.

——*mentisque capacius altæ.* Ovid.

Monday, June 1. 1713.

AS I was, the other Day, taking a Solitary Walk in St. *Paul's*, I indulged my Thoughts in the Purſuit of a certain Analogy between that Fabrick and the *Chriſtian Church* in the largeſt Senſe. The Divine Order and OEconomy of the one ſeemed to be emblematically ſet forth by the juſt, plain, and majeſtic Architecture of the other. And as the one conſiſts of a great variety of Parts united in the ſame regular Deſign, according to the trueſt Art, and moſt exact Proportion; ſo the other contains a decent Subordination of Members, various ſacred Inſtitutions, ſublime Doctrines, and ſolid Precepts of Morality digeſted into the ſame Deſign, and with an admirable Concurrence tending to one View, the Happineſs and Exaltation of Human Nature.

In the midſt of my Contemplation I beheld a Fly upon one of the Pillars; and it ſtraightway came into my Head, that this ſame Fly was a *free-Thinker*. For it required ſome Comprehenſion in the Eye of the Spectator, to take in at one view the various Parts of the Building, in order to obſerve their Symmetry and Deſign. But to the Fly, whoſe Proſpect was confined to a little part of one of the Stones of a ſingle Pillar, the joint Beauty of the whole, or the diſtinct Uſe of its Parts, were inconſpicuous, and nothing cou'd appear but ſmall Inequalities in the Surface of the hewn Stone, which in the view of that Inſect ſeemed ſo many deformed Rocks and Precipices.

The Thoughts of a *Free-Thinker* are employed on certain minute Particularities of Religion, the Difficulty of a ſingle Text, or the Unaccountableneſs of ſome Step of Providence or Point of Doctrine to his narrow Faculties, without comprehending the Scope and Deſign of Chriſtianity, the Perfection to which it raiſeth Human Nature, the Light it hath ſhed abroad in the World, and the cloſe Connexion it hath as well with the Good of Publick Societies, as with that of particular Perſons.

This raiſed in me ſome Reflections on that Frame or Diſpoſition which is called *Largeneſs of Mind*, its neceſſity towards forming a true Judgment of Things, and where the Soul is not incurably ſtinted by Nature, what are the likelieſt Methods to give it Enlargement.

It is evident that Philoſophy doth open and enlarge the Mind, by the general Views to which Men are habituated in that Study, and by the Contemplation of more numerous and diſtant Objects, than fall within the Sphere of Mankind in the ordinary Purſuits of Life. Hence it comes to paſs, that Philoſophers judge of moſt Things very different from the Vulgar. Some Inſtances of this may be ſeen in the *Theætetus* of *Plato*, where *Socrates* makes the following Remarks, among others of the like Nature.

'When a Philoſopher hears ten thouſand Acres 'mentioned as a great Eſtate, he looks upon it as 'an inconſiderable Spot, having been uſed to con'template the whole Globe of Earth. Or when he 'beholds a Man elated with the Nobility of his 'Race, becauſe he can reckon a Series of ſeven 'rich Anceſtors, the Philoſopher thinks him a ſtu'pid ignorant Fellow, whoſe Mind cannot reach 'to a general View of Human Nature, which 'wou'd ſhew him that we have all innumerable An'ceſtors, among whom are crowds of Rich and 'Poor, Kings and Slaves, *Greeks* and *Barbarians*. Thus far *Socrates*, who was accounted wiſer than the reſt of the Heathens, for Notions which approach the neareſt to Chriſtianity.

As all Parts and Branches of Philoſophy, or Speculative Knowledge, are uſeful in that reſpect, Aſtronomy is peculiarly adapted to remedy a little and narrow Spirit. In that Science there are good Reaſons aſſigned to prove the Sun an hundred thouſand times bigger than our Earth; and the diſtance of the Stars ſo prodigious, that a Cannon Bullet continuing in its ordinary rapid Motion, would not arrive from hence, at the neareſt of them, in the ſpace of an hundred and fifty thouſand Years. Theſe Ideas wonderfully dilate and expand the Mind. There is ſomething in the Immenſity of this diſtance, that ſhocks

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